

MINUTES

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Municipal Decision Making

The meeting was convened at 6:00 PM in the Board Room of the DPW. Jim Palermo served as the facilitator.

Present were committee members Jim Palermo, Lisa DePiano, Wendy Foxmyn, Alex Ghiselin and Bob Reckman. Susan Enz was present. James Sullivan taped the meeting for future broadcast on NCTV. This is the last meeting that James will tape and we are sorry to lose his services. David Narkewicz was on vacation.

The minutes of our last meeting were approved. The committee discussed the advantages of the new format that Wendy used. Bob said that he was happy to have Wendy do the minutes but it was agreed that Bob would continue to prepare them.

Lisa distributed a list of items from the forum. The committee agreed that the categories listed would serve to guide the organization in some of its final reports.

Michael Bardsley arrived at 6:20.

Alex reported on the Meadows Land Use Plan forum to be held on August 25 at 5:30 in the community room at JFK. There was discussion of how the forum will be conducted. The subcommittee agreed to meet again before the next BPC meeting and will make a recommendation at our meeting on August 6.

The report of the In-reach committee was presented and reviewed by Wendy. They have a very ambitious agenda that will require additional labor to achieve. There was discussion of how they might choose which City officials and Board members to talk to. They will prepared a list of questions and distribute them to the BPC before our next meeting. Their goal is to have the information gathering complete by Oct. 6.

Bob discussed the project he and David have undertaken to prepare a review of the existing literature on best practices in other communities. They hope to have this complete by Labor Day.

We discussed the accuracy of our time line and agreed to review it again at our meeting on Wednesday, August 6.

We discussed the idea of having some meetings in the daytime. We will review this question at a future meeting.

Wendy discussed a meeting with Jim Foudy and Bob at the Gazette on Wednesday morning. Jim said that he would be sure our meetings were listed in the Gazette and encouraged us to issue press releases when we had events that we hoped the public would attend. He said that he was sure the Gazette would cover any report that we issued to the City Council. We could meet with a reporter for a feature story when we are ready. He also suggested that we write an op-ed piece

for the Gazette. Alex agreed to write a press release for the Meadows event that we will review at our next meeting.

We had a discussion of whether we should have standing committees and what the difference is between standing committees and ad hoc working groups, especially in regard to the open meeting law. We will revisit this question at our meeting on August 6 when it will be on our agenda.

Alex reported on his research into other meeting spaces in the City. He has reserved a meeting room in the Florence Community Center for our next meeting. Our plan is to have our Wednesday meeting each month in a different location and our Thursday meeting at the DPW.

Bob reported on the Northampton Design Forum and its invitation to the Notre Dame team. We discussed whether we should endorse this effort and looked at the position we took on June 4. We agree that this may be a fine model of a best practice and process and encourage the public to participate. There was a discussion of whether or not we should endorse the charrette but we were not able to reach consensus on this question.

Bob talked about the Pulaski Park plan development process and told the committee that there would be a public meeting of the BPW on September 17, 2008 at 7 PM in the Community Room at JFK Middle School where the designers will present their plans and take questions from the public and the BPW. The public is strongly encouraged to attend.

Check outs:

- Bob , Alex and Jim will work on planning for the Meadows Forum. This includes a press release that Alex will prepare about the event. Wendy will review the questions with an eye to making the list shorter. They plan to meet at 8 AM on Wednesday, July 30 at 36 Fruit St.
- Lisa will prepare some possible questions for City officials. Wendy, Lisa and David will meet to prepare some additional recommendations for that process.
- Jim will prepare an agenda for the next meeting that he will moderate.
- Lisa and Bob will try to find another camera person to cover our meetings.
- Michael will begin thinking about the final report format.
- Bob and David will continue their research into best practices in other communities.
- Bob will reserve the BPW Board room for our future meetings.
- Alex will confirm that the space at the Florence Community Center is ADA compliant.

The next meeting will be on August 6 at 6 PM. in the Florence Community Center.

The meeting adjourned at 8 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Reckman